

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW AT-A-GLANCE

### AMERICAN OVERSEAS RESEARCH CENTERS PROGRAM CFDA No. 84.274

#### **AUTHORIZATION**

Title VI, section 609 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

#### **PURPOSE of PROGRAM**

The American Overseas Research Centers (AORC) Program provides grants to eligible consortia of U.S. institutions of higher education to establish or operate overseas research centers that promote postgraduate research, exchanges, and area studies.

#### **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Consortia of U.S. institutions of higher education.

#### **LIMITATIONS FOR ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS/ PROSPECTIVE AWARDEES**

The Secretary shall only award grants to centers under section 610 that:

- receive more than 50 percent of their funding from public or private United States sources;
- have a permanent presence in the country in which the center is located;
- are organizations described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1993 which are exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

#### **APPLICABLE REGULATIONS**

The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 82, 85, and 86.

#### **ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES AND CENTER COSTS**

Grants awarded under this program may be used for the following:

- to pay all or a portion of the cost of establishing or operating a center or program, including the cost of faculty and staff stipends and salaries;
- faculty, staff, and student travel;
- the operation and maintenance of overseas facilities;

- the cost of teaching and research materials;
- the cost of acquisition, maintenance, and preservation of library collections;
- the cost of bringing visiting scholars and faculty to a center to teach or to conduct research;
- the cost of organizing and managing conferences;
- the cost of publications and dissemination of material for the scholarly and general public.

### **HOW GRANT APPLICATIONS ARE EVALUATED**

The Secretary uses the selection criteria in sections 75.209 and 75.210, 34 CFR Part 75 of EDGAR to evaluate grant applications. The technical review form used to evaluate applications appears on pages 14-18 of this application booklet. The form includes the selection criteria and the maximum points assigned to the criteria.

### **KEY DATES**

- Deadline for Submitting Applications: November 4, 1999
- Panel Review of Applications: December 13 – 17, 1999
- Anticipated Date for Making Awards: May 31, 2000
- Project Period for New Grants: October 1, 2000 - September 30, 2003

### **CONTACT PERSON**

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## ORGANIZING THE APPLICATION: FORMAT AND CONTENT

Please prepare the application using the following format, and develop the application narrative to address the eight selection criteria on pages 14-18. Organizing the application in the manner described below assists the readers in evaluating the grant application.

**Technical Requirements.** Prepare the application using no smaller than a 12-point font, if using a proportional computer font. If using a non-proportional computer font, do not use more than 10 characters to the inch. Number all pages in the application, including forms. Place the page number within the one-inch top or bottom margin. Do not include any unnumbered pages.

Limit the application **narrative** to no more than 25 pages (8 1/2 x 11"). Please double-space the narrative text and use one-inch margins. **Proposal narratives that exceed the 25-page limit, or narratives that are presented in a smaller font size, or use spacing that makes the narrative exceed the equivalent of the page limit, will not be evaluated.**

- A. **Cover Page.** Standard Form 424, with an original signature of the applicant's authorized representative.
- B. **Table of Contents.** Include one for easy reference of the grant application.
- C. **Abstract.** Include a one-page abstract describing the Center's purpose, services, resources, and audiences served. The abstract may be single or double-spaced, and **is not included** in the 25-page limit.
- D. **Map (optional).** Include a map indicating the country in which the Center is located and the geographic area on which the Center's activities and programs focus. The optional map **is not included** in the 25-page limit.
- E. **Narrative Content.** Develop the narrative to address the eight selection criteria included on pages 14-18. It is helpful to the readers if applicants use the criteria themselves as headings throughout the narrative. Incorporate information describing how the proposed activities will be accomplished during the three-year project period.

Using the criteria as the parameters for the proposed activities, identify the students, faculty, and other constituents to be served. To assist the readers in evaluating the strength of the proposed activities and the capacity of the Center to meet the purpose of the American Overseas Research Centers (AORC) Program, please provide detailed information to address the specific factors encompassed in each of the eight criteria. For example, an effective response to the “Need for the Project” criterion, should describe:

(a.) the magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project;

(b.) the extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses; and,

(c.) the extent to which the proposed project will prepare persons in fields for which shortages have been demonstrated.

F. **Budget**. Include budget forms and budget detail for a 36-month project period. The budget should reflect costs that are reasonable and necessary for developing and implementing the activities described in the application narrative.

Refer to the specific instructions for preparing the budget forms and narrative.

G. **Appendices**. Include only the following in the appendices: (1.) List of institutions of higher education that comprise the Center consortium; (2.) Brief biographical information for all administrative and professional staff (domestic site and foreign site) directly involved with the proposed project; and, (3.) Statement certifying that the applicant meets the three limitations specified in paragraph (c) of section 609 of the statute.

The appendices are not subject to the 25-page limit. However, applicants are encouraged to restrict the number of pages in the appendices to a reasonable amount, so that readers can evaluate the grant application in a reasonable amount of time.

## THE APPLICATION BUDGET: FORMS AND NARRATIVE

Applicants are required to present a budget that includes proposed costs for each year for which funding is requested. The application budget includes both the required ED Form 524 on pages 12-13, in addition to budget narrative pages that itemize the costs proposed for each budget category for each year of the project.

Use ED Form No. 524 Section A-“Budget Summary U.S. Department of Education Funds” to show the amount requested for each applicable budget category and the total amount requested for each year of the proposed project.

Applicants should prepare a budget request for a 36-month project period. Complete columns (a) Project Year 1, (b) Project Year 2, (c) Project Year 3, and (f) Total, showing the proposed costs for the three-year project period. Applicants are not required to submit ED Form No. 524 Section B- “Budget Summary Non-Federal Funds”.

Entered in line 10 of ED Form No. 524 Section A and Section B, is eight percent (8%), the allowed indirect cost rate. In accordance with section 75.562 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), the Secretary approves an indirect cost rate of 8% of the total direct costs of the project for an educational training project.

Applicants may request indirect costs of 8% of total direct charges, or may decline to request indirect costs be supported with the Title VI, American Overseas Research Centers Program grant.

**NOTE:** The budget forms and budget detail pages are not subject to the 25-page limit.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to vary from 13 to 22 hours per response, with an average of 17.5 hours, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, Information Management and Compliance Division, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project 1875-0102, Washington, D.C. 20503.

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR ED FORM NO. 524**

### **General Instructions**

This form is used to apply to individual U.S. Department of Education discretionary grant programs. Unless directed otherwise, provide the same budget information for each year of the multi-year funding request. Pay attention to applicable program-specific instructions.

### **Section A- Budget Summary** **U.S. Department of Education Funds**

All applicants must complete Section A and provide a breakdown by the applicable budget categories shown in lines 1-11.

Lines 1-11, columns (a)-(e):

For each project year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Lines 1-11, column (f):

Show the multi-year total for each budget category. If funding is requested for only one project year, leave the column blank.

Line 12, columns (a)-(e):

Show the total budget request for each project year for which funding is requested.

Line 12, column (f):

Show the total amount requested for all project years. If funding is requested for only one year, leave this space blank.

## **Section B- Budget Summary**

### **Non-Federal Funds**

If you are required to provide or volunteer to provide matching funds or other non-Federal resources to the project, these should be shown for each applicable budget category on lines 1-11 of Section B.

Lines 1-11, columns (a)-(e):

For each project year for which matching funds or other contributions are provided, show the total contribution for each applicable budget category.

Lines 1-11, column (f):

Show the multi-year total for each budget category. If non-Federal contributions are provided for only one project year, leave the column blank.

Line 12, columns (a)-(e):

Show the total matching or other contributions for each project year.

Line 12, column (f):

Show the total amount to be contributed for all years of the multi-year project. If funding contributions are provided for only one project year, leave this space blank.

## **Section C- Other Budget Information**

### **Please pay attention to program-specific instructions.**

1. Provide an itemized budget breakdown, by project year, for each budget category listed in Sections A and B.
2. If applicable to this program, enter the type of indirect rate (provisional, predetermined, final or fixed) that will be in effect during the funding period. In addition, enter the estimated amount of the base to which the rate is applied, and the total indirect expense.
3. If applicable to this program, provide the rate and base on which fringe benefits are calculated.
4. Provide additional comments for clarification, as needed.

## GUIDANCE ON SECTION 427 OF GEPA

Section 427 in the U.S. Department of Education (ED) General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) was enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Pub. L. 103-382), and applies to applicants for new grant awards under ED grant programs. Section 427 of GEPA requires applicant institutions to include information in their grant applications that describes the strategies and resources for ensuring equal access for project participants who are members of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

All applicants must include information in their applications to address section 427 of GEPA in order to be considered for funding.

Institutions applying for new grants under the American Overseas Research Centers (AORC) Program (CFDA No. 84.274) can incorporate information to address the GEPA provision in the narrative sections dealing with the "Quality of Project Services" and "Quality of Project Personnel" selection criteria. Also, applicants may address the GEPA provision in the context of any other selection criterion, if appropriate.

If applicant institutions prefer to submit a brief, succinct narrative describing how they plan to address the GEPA provision, they may do so by including a separate narrative with the Federal forms submitted with the application.

Please be advised, however, that the relevant selection criteria still must be addressed in full in the narrative.

Section 427 of GEPA is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and the approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

### **Illustrations of How an Applicant May Comply with Section 427:**

- An applicant that proposes to use the grant award to hire additional faculty, describes in the grant application how it intends to recruit candidates from among traditionally underrepresented groups.
- An applicant that proposes to conduct conferences for postgraduate researchers and disseminate the conference papers, describes how it will accommodate access for attendees who have disabilities, as well as make the published materials available to them in appropriate formats.



## INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

This program is subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79.

The objective of Executive Order 12372 is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and to strengthen federalism by relying on State and local processes for State and local government coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

Applicants must contact the appropriate State Single Point of Contact to find out about, and to comply with, the State's process under Executive Order 12372. Applicants proposing to perform activities in more than one State should immediately contact the Single Point of Contact for each of those States and follow the procedure established in each State under the Executive Order.

A list identifying the Single Point of Contact for each State appears on the following pages. In States that have not established a process or chosen a program to review, State, area-wide, regional, and local entities may submit comments directly to the Department.

Any State Process Recommendation and other comments submitted by a State Single Point of Contact and any comments from State, area-wide, regional, and local entities must be mailed or hand-delivered by the date indicated in this notice to the following address:

The Secretary  
E.O. 12372-CFDA No. 84.274  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C.

**ATTENTION: THIS IS NOT THE ADDRESS FOR SUBMITTING THE GRANT APPLICATION. DO NOT SEND APPLICATIONS TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.**

Proof of mailing will be determined on the same basis as applications. See "Application Transmittal Instructions" on pages 26-27.

## APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

An application for a grant award must be mailed or hand delivered by the **November 4, 1999** closing date.

### **APPLICATIONS SENT BY MAIL**

An application sent by mail must be addressed to:

U.S. Department of Education  
Application Control Center  
Attention: CFDA Number 84.274  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C.

An application must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1.) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service Postmark
- (2.) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3.) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4.) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the U.S. Secretary of Education.

If an application is sent through the U.S. Postal Service, the Secretary does not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1.) A private metered postmark, or
- (2.) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

An applicant should note that the U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, an applicant should check with its local post office.

An applicant is encouraged to use registered or at least first class mail.

Each late applicant will be notified that its application will not be considered.

## **APPLICATIONS DELIVERED BY HAND/COURIER SERVICE**

An application that is hand delivered must be taken to:

U.S. Department of Education  
Application Control Center  
Room 3633  
General Services Administration National Capital Region  
7th and D Streets, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4725

The Application Control Center will accept deliveries between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Washington, D.C. time) daily, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Individuals delivering applications must use the D Street entrance. Proper identification is necessary to enter the building.

In order for an application sent through a Courier Service to be considered timely, the Courier Service must be in receipt of the application on or before the closing date.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

- Q. How many applications should be submitted to the Department (Application Control Center)?**
- A.** Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) section 75.109 requires applicants to submit an original and two copies. The original grant application must include an original signature of the authorized representative for the applicant institution (See SF 424, item 18 (a-e)).
- Q. What conditions will cause the grant application not to be evaluated for funding?**
- A.** The grant application will not be evaluated for funding if: the applicant consortia is not eligible; the applicant does not comply with all of the technical stipulations and procedures governing the submission of the application; the application does not contain the information required under the program; or the proposed project cannot be funded under the authorizing statute or implementing regulations for the program. (EDGAR 75.216)
- Q. What is the maximum amount that an applicant may request in the proposed budget?**
- A.** Applicants should develop a budget for a three-year project period. The amount requested for each budget period in the 36-month project, must be in a similar ballpark as the amounts specified in the “estimated range of awards” section of the Federal Register notice reprinted on page four of this booklet.
- If a “maximum award amount” is specified in the Federal Register notice, and an application requests Title VI funds that exceed the specified maximum award amount, the Department may not have the application evaluated. (EDGAR 75.104(b))
- Q. Who evaluates the grant applications submitted for competition, and what selection criteria are used to evaluate the applications?**

- A.** A panel of three readers consisting of experts in foreign languages and area studies, evaluates the applications using the selection criteria prescribed in EDGAR sections 75.209 and 75.210 and, the provisions in section 609 of the Title VI legislation.

Each reader independently reads and scores each application using the technical review form included in this application booklet. The form includes the selection criteria and the maximum number of points for the criteria. The form requests each reader's numerical rating on each of the eight criteria and their substantive comments justifying the scores given.

- Q. How does the Department decide which applicants to recommend to receive new grant awards, and when are applicants notified of the Department's decisions?**

- A.** Applicants are recommended for new grant awards based on the applicant's rank in the competition. The rank is established by the average of the total scores assigned by the three readers. In conjunction with the rank order of the application, the Department considers the following information in deciding which applicants to recommend for new grant awards: (1) the information in the application and (2) any other information relevant to a criterion, priority, or other requirement that applies to the selection of applications for new awards, including the applicant's use of funds under a previous award under the same Federal program. (EDGAR 75.217)

To officially award a grant, the program officer processes a notification of grant award and sends it to the grantee. The notification of grant award sets the amount of the grant, and attachments to notification establish specific conditions governing the award. (EDGAR 75.235)

The Department expects to notify applicants about the status of their applications by May 31, 2000.

- Q. If an applicant is recommended for a new grant award in FY 2000, what are the conditions for receiving funding after the first budget period?**

- A.** The Department may make a continuation award for a budget period after the first budget period of an approved multi-year project if: (1) the Congress has appropriated sufficient funds under the program; and (2.) the recipient submits an annual performance report that includes information indicating substantial progress

toward meeting the objectives in its approved application.

## **CHECKLIST BEFORE SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION**

- An original and two copies of the application are submitted.
- Cover Page (SF 424) accompanies the copies. The original application cover page (SF 424) has an original signature of the representative authorized to act on behalf of the applicant.
- All copies of the application comply with the specified technical requirements.
- All copies include the required abstract, narrative, budget form (ED 524), budget narrative, and appendices.
- All copies include the required assurances and certifications.
- A copy of the application has been submitted to the State Single Point of Contact, if required for review under Executive Order 12374.
- Applications include information to address the provisions specified in Section 427 of GEPA.
- To ensure delivery of the application, use the address specified in the Application Transmittal Instructions.
- Applicant D-U-N-S identifier appears in section 2 on ED 424, and is correct.

**AMERICAN OVERSEAS RESEARCH CENTERS (AORC) PROGRAM  
(CFDA NO. 84.274)**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

AORC PROGRAM OVERVIEW	1-2
TITLE VI STATUTE: Sections 601 and 610	3
<u>FEDERAL REGISTER</u> AORC Notice of Closing	4
ORGANIZING THE APPLICATION: Format and Content	5-6
COVER SHEET: Standard Form 424 and Instructions	7-8
THE APPLICATION BUDGET: Forms and Narrative	9
Instructions for ED Form 524	10-11
ED FORM 524 Section A	12
ED FORM 524 Section B	13
FY 1998 TECHNICAL REVIEW FORM SELECTION CRITERIA	14-18
GUIDANCE ON SECTION 427 OF GEPA	19
EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372: INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW	20
STATE SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT LIST	21-25
APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS	26-27
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION	28-29
ASSURANCES/CERTIFICATIONS/DISCLOSURES	
• Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	30(a)-30(b)
• Certification Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters	31(a)-31(b)
• Certification Regarding Lower Tier Covered Transactions	32
• Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	33(a)-33(c)
CHECKLIST BEFORE SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION	34